

# Commission on Human Rights

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## Kentucky Commission on Human Rights issues 2013 annual report

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The Kentucky Commission on Human Rights has issued its 2013 annual report. It highlights business conducted during the state fiscal reporting period of July 1, 2012, to June 30, 2013.

See it at [www.kchr.ky.gov](http://www.kchr.ky.gov)

The commission processed intakes from 3,020 people during this time. Each of these individuals believed they were victims of illegal discrimination in Kentucky. This is an increase of 689 or 30 percent over last year's 2,331 intakes.

"It is challenging to draw conclusions about the increase as there are several factors to consider," said John. J. Johnson, commission executive director. "At the least, it reflects protected class members' perceived experiences with prejudice and unequal treatment in Kentucky communities during this period, and we believe it also reflects the increase in public awareness the Kentucky Commission on Human Rights was able to provide to make Kentuckians aware of the law and commission services," he said.

From the intakes, the commission filed 361 formal discrimination complaints, a result of these meeting statutory requirements and falling within the agency's jurisdiction as stipulated in the Kentucky and U.S. Civil Rights acts. There were more complaints in the area of employment (260) than any other area. Fifty-six complaints were in the area of public accommodations, and 45 were in the area of housing.

There were 123 complaints based on race, more than on any other basis. In 2012, race complaints had been surpassed by sex or gender complaints; it was the first time since the Kentucky Civil Rights Act passed in 1966, that race had been surpassed by another basis. Disability complaints were second this year, with 84, and sex was third with 65 complaints.

Retaliation was named 42 times as a basis. Retaliation complaints may be made, for example, after a person has already filed a discrimination complaint with the commission, and the person then allegedly suffers retaliation as a result. Or a person may be retaliated against for reporting to an employer or landlord, for example, that discrimination has occurred. These types of retaliation are illegal.

Thirty-seven complaints were based on the age of 40 years-old or older, a basis protected in the area of employment. Seventeen complaints were based on national origin, six were based on religion, and five were based on familial status. Familial status protects in the area of housing people with children under the age of 18 in the household and protects women who are pregnant. One complaint was based on tobacco-smoking status, which is protected in the area of employment. In Kentucky, it is against the law not to hire a person because he or she smokes or to terminate a smoker as long as that person follows the employer smoking policy while at work.

There are more bases listed than complaints filed because complaints may consist of more than one basis.

“Clearly, discrimination occurs within Kentucky and the enforcement of civil rights by the Kentucky Commission on Human Rights is required for the safety and well-being of all Kentuckians,” Johnson said.

The commission is the state government authority that enforces the Kentucky Civil Rights Act, Kentucky Revised Statutes Chapter 344. Through partnership affiliations with the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD) and the U.S. Equal Employment Opportunity Commission (EEOC), the agency enforces the U.S. Civil Rights Act, the U.S. Fair Housing Act, the U.S. Americans with Disabilities Act, and other federal civil rights laws.